production and asking banks to finance high-tech activities like aquaculture, floriculture, tissue culture, bio-technology etc. Public Sector banks having short-fall in lending to the priority sector have been directed by RBI to contribute Rs. 2500 crores to the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF-II) on a pro-rata basis. The private banks which have failed to meet the priority sector lending target as on last Friday of March, 1996 have been directed to deposit 50% of the shortfall with NABARD or SIDBI at 8% per annum for a period of one year.

Setting-up of National Commission on Agriculture

2884. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAM-CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government feel that the time has come that a National Commission on Agriculture should be set-up;

(b) the recommendation of the First National Commission on Agriculture about formation of Commission from time to time;

(c) whether Government also feel that the Standing Committee are sufficient and that there is no need for any Commissions; and

(d) the policy of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The Government presently do not feel the necessity of setting up a next National Commission on Agriculture. The first National Commission of Agriculture has not made any recommendation regarding formation of Commission from time to time.

(c) and (d) The Parliamentary Standing Committees on Agriculture Allied Sectors have been very helpful in reviewing of the on-going schemes and the formulation of new policies/schemes for the development of agriculture. Besides, the Government have been setting up Committees on specific issues and when required. The Agricultural Policy Resolution is under finalisation wherein the Government has tried to include all measures to enhance agricultural development.

National Agricultural Technology Programme

2885. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the stage and level of the National Agricultural Technology Programme at present;

(b) the amount being spent on it;

(c) the assistance received from the World Bank;

(d) the achievements of this programme; and

(e) the additional efforts made in this area?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The Indian Council of Agriculture Research in close collaboration with the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Government of India, is formulating a National agricultural technology Project to strengthen the National Agricultural Research capability by bridging critical gaps in technology generation, assessment, refinement and transfer. The project is to be funded by the World Bank. The contemplated Project is at the pre-appraisal stage. Currently the World Bank Mission is in India for pre-appraisal.

(b) to (e) Does not arise, Sir.